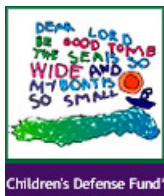




The Brookdale Foundation



ARIZONA

A State Fact Sheet for Grandparents and Other Relatives Raising Children



July 2006

Across the United States, more than 6 million children are being raised in households headed by grandparents and other relatives; 2.5 million children are in these households without any parents present. As the children's parents struggle with substance abuse, mental illness, incarceration, economic hardship, divorce, domestic violence, and other challenges, these caregivers provide a vital safety net to children inside and outside of the foster care system. This fact sheet provides important information and resources for the grandparents and other relatives raising children in your state.

National and State Data*

The Children

- Nationally, 4.5 million children are living in grandparent-headed households (6.3% of all children under age 18). This represents a 30% increase from 1990 to 2000.
- There are another 1.5 million children in the United States who are living in households headed by other relatives (2.1% of all children under 18).
- In Arizona, there are 96,062 children living in grandparent-headed households (7.0% of all children in the state). There are another 36,720 children living in households headed by other relatives (2.7% of all children in the state). Of the children living in households headed by grandparents or other relatives in Arizona, 54,833 are living there without either parent present.

The Grandparents

- Nationally, 2.4 million grandparents report they are responsible for their grandchildren living with them: 29% of these grandparents are African American; 17% are Hispanic/Latino; 2% are American Indian or Alaskan Native; 3% are Asian; and 47% are White. 34% of these grandparents live in households without the children's parents present. 71% are under the age of 60; 19% live in poverty.
- In Arizona, 52,210 grandparents report they are responsible for their grandchildren living with them [13,262 in Phoenix and 4,995 in Tucson]: 5% of these grandparents are African American; 39% are Hispanic/Latino; 14% are American Indian and Alaskan Native; 1% are Asian; and 40% are White. 27% of these grandparents live in households without the children's parents present. 74% are under the age of 60; 19% live in poverty.

Additional Information

- United States Census data on grandparents who are responsible for meeting the basic needs of their grandchildren can also be broken down by county, congressional district, and other categories. Log on to <http://factfinder.census.gov>. Additional data on grandparents and grandchildren are available at www.census.gov/population/www/cen2000/briefs.html.
- Additional national and state data on grandparents raising children are available on AARP's website at www.aarp.org/grandparents.

* These data are taken from the U.S. Census Bureau Table DP-2. Profile Selected Social Characteristics:2000.

Programs That Can Help

• ***The Grandparents Raising Grandchildren in Southern Arizona Coalition*** is a group of grandparents and other relative caregivers raising children, and service providers in Cochise, Coconino, Maricopa, Pima and Yuma counties. Sponsored by the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension, the coalition provides referrals to Arizona kinship care families, including information on legal options, parenting skills, community food banks, support groups, school resources, and wellness centers. The coalition has also developed a *Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Resource Notebook* that is being made available on the Cooperative extension website: www.ag.arizona.edu/grandparents. *Southern Arizona Contact:* Linda Block, University of Arizona Cooperative Extension, Pima at (520) 626-5161 or lblock@ag.arizona.edu. *Central Arizona Contact:* Jessica Sanchez-Jackson, University of Arizona Cooperative Extension, Maricopa County, at (620) 470-8086 (ext. 12) or jessica@ag.arizona.edu. *Northern Arizona Contact:* Beth Tucker, University of Arizona Cooperative Extension, Coconino County, at (928) 774-1868 or tucker@ag.arizona.edu.

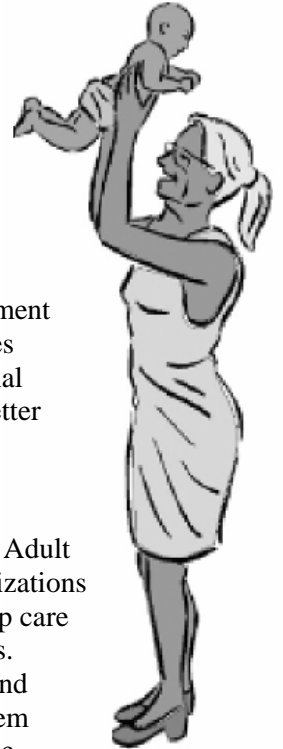
• ***Kinship Kare of Northern Arizona (KKONA)*** is a program of the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension that offers education, advocacy, and support to families raising relatives' children. KKONA provides educational workshops, support groups, family activities and Grandparent Mentors to families in Northern Arizona. *Contact:* Michele Lytle, KKONA Coordinator, at (928) 774-1868 (ext. 15) or mlytle@ag.arizona.edu.

• ***The Support Connections Program*** is a collaborative effort between the Elderly Care Management Program at Catholic Social Service and the Prescott Unified School District. The program provides comprehensive support services to grandparents and other relative caregivers, including educational support and recreational opportunities. The group also provides quarterly workshops and a newsletter for caregivers along with a resource manual. *Contact:* Jean Jongsma at (928) 778-2531 or jjongsma@cssaz.org.

• ***The Arizona Kinship Care Coalition***, facilitated by the Beatitudes Center for Developing Older Adult Resources (Center D.O.A.R.), is comprised of individuals, private and public agencies, and organizations statewide whose goal is to increase community awareness of the special problems faced by kinship care families and to collaborate with state and community agencies to expand services to these families. The Coalition meets monthly to share resource up-dates, listen to presentations by local experts, and develop a list of recommendations to provide support for kinship care families in order to keep them together. The group also sponsors special celebrations for Grandparent's Day in September and the Grandparent University (a one-day seminar) in October. *Contact:* Donna Heppermann, GENERATIONS Program Director at (602) 274-5022 or heppermann@centerdoar.org.

• ***National Family Caregiver Support Program***: Arizona's eight Area Agencies on Aging provide a variety of services to family caregivers with funding received for the implementation of the National Family Caregiver Support Program. The National Family Caregiver Support Program allows up to 10% of its funds to be allocated to provide services for grandparents and older individuals that are relative caregivers of children 18 and younger. Referrals for services, resources, education, training, support groups, and respite care for grandparent and other relative caregivers are provided throughout Arizona. *Contact:* David Besst, Caregiver Programs Coordinator, Arizona Department of Economic Security, Division of Aging and Adult Services, at (602) 542-6431 or dbesst@azdes.gov.

• ***United Cerebral Palsy of Southern Arizona*** offers information on the resources and services available for kinship caregivers raising children with disabilities in Southern Arizona. This includes information on obtaining financial assistance and locating support group services. United Cerebral Palsy helps link kinship caregivers with appropriate agencies and service providers. United Cerebral Palsy also has a video available featuring older caregivers describing how they care for children with disabilities. In addition, they have a resource manual that can be downloaded from their website, www.ucpsa.org. *Contact:* Sharon Finefrock, Executive Assistant, (520) 795-3108 or sfinefrock@ucpsa.org.



- ***Beatitudes Center D.O.A.R. (Developing Older Adult Resources)*** coordinates Project GrandCare, an innovative program designed to educate, empower, and support grandparents and other relative caregivers. Project GrandCare offers entitlement and benefits counseling, information and referral, legal guidance, monthly support groups, seminars, respite care and social activities. Project GrandCare also offers a resource guide “Helping to Raise Your Children’s Children” that is available in both English and Spanish. Services are free. *Contact:* Patricia Dominguez, Project GrandCare Coordinator, at (602) 274-5022 or dominguez@centerdoar.org.
- ***The Center for Effective Parenting*** runs a support group for grandparents and other relatives as parents in the Springdale area. Services include telephone, e-mail, and in-person information and referrals, legislative advocacy, and support groups in English and Spanish. *Contact:* Suzann Hernandez at (479) 751-6168 or shernand@jtlshop.jonesnet.org.
- ***Grandparents United for Children’s Rights, Inc.*** provides a variety of information and resources to grandparents and other relatives raising children throughout Arizona, including information referrals, legal advice, support group workshops, and a curriculum for grandparents and other relative caregivers. *Contact:* Billy Wilda at (602) 273-0004 or bwilda@quest.net.
- ***Arizona Children’s Association’s Golden Gate Community Center Kare Intergenerational Program*** provides information and service referrals for grandparents and other relatives raising children inside and outside of Arizona’s foster care system. The program’s primary area of focus is on the families living in the Western Phoenix (27th Avenue to 75th Avenue and Northern to Van Buren). Program services are developed in response to articulated needs of these west Phoenix residents. Current services include: case management, information and referral, and parenting education. Services are free and Spanish-speaking personnel are available on-site. *Contact:* Phyllis Habib, Program Supervisor, at (602) 233-0017 (ext. 13) or phabib@arizonaschildren.org.
- ***The Kinship and Adoption, Resource and Education (KARE) Family Center*** in Tucson is a “one stop shop” multiservice center where grandparents and other relatives caring for children under the age of 18, as well as people who have adopted children, receive support and services to help raise children successfully. Key partners in the Center are Arizona’s Children Association and Casey Family Programs working in collaboration with Pima Council on Aging, University of Arizona Cooperative Extension and the State of Arizona Department of Economic Security, Division of Developmental Disabilities, District II. Services offered include:
 - Legal Information and Support, including assistance with a revocable legal guardianship, help navigating the state protective services system and a legal information clinic staffed by local attorneys, classes on adoption, guardianship and other long term permanent choices for children.
 - Support seeking financial benefits for which caregivers may be eligible, including TANF kinship subsidy, state managed health insurance options for children and adults, and other state and federally allocated benefits, tax credits, courses in money management and savings.
 - Mutual support for adults and youth through kinship support groups (Spanish and English). Childcare and food provided at most events.
 - Professional behavioral health counseling for families, referrals for individual counseling for adults.
 - Case management for families, including crisis management, systems navigation, extensive information and referral, emergency help with one-time expenses such as clothing and shoes, food boxes, diapers. Specialized services for caregivers over 60 caring for children under 18.
 - Recreation and wellness, including spa nights, health screening, outings, family gatherings, a summer program for children ages 7-12, after school tutoring, arts program, and social and life skills training for youth.



- Community education, including parenting classes, and topics chosen by caregivers including extensive information on stress management, effects of drug and alcohol use and abuse, child development, etc. Extensive lending library of kinship resources available on site.

Contact: Call (520) 323-4476 or e-mail any inquiries to kare@arizonaschildren.org.

Children in Foster Care

Sometimes state child welfare agencies place children in foster care with grandparents or other relatives. Most state agencies call these placements “kinship care.” In Arizona, the Department of Economic Security reports:

Number of children in kinship care: As of December 2005, there were 9,895 children in out-of-home placements under the Department’s responsibility. Of these children, 2,714 were placed with unlicensed kin and 174 children were placed with licensed kin.

Preferences for kinship care: State law and policy require that kin be considered first when an out-of-home placement is sought for a child under the Department’s care and custody.

Kinship care licensing: Kinship foster care parents are encouraged to become licensed foster parents, thus enabling the kin to receive the same foster care payment rate as non-kin foster parents. There is no separate licensing program for kinship foster parents. Kin must meet the same licensing standards as non-kin foster parents. Kin are not required to be licensed foster parents for children in the care and custody of the Department.

Subsidized guardianship programs: In addition to foster care payments and other benefits available to kin raising children in the foster care system, some states also have subsidized guardianship programs. Arizona has the Subsidized Permanent Guardianship Program that provides cash assistance to relatives who become the legal guardians of children who are in the Department’s custody and have been in the guardian’s custody for at least nine months. The Permanent Legal Guardian must first apply for any federal and state benefits that the child may be eligible to receive. (Ariz. Rev. Stat. Sec. 8-814, 8-872). Call Warren Davison, Foster Care and Adoption Recruitment Coordinator, at (602) 542-1356 or email wdavison@azdes.gov.

State kinship care contact: Questions about kinship foster care placements should be directed to Lauri Devine at (602) 542-2419 or ldevine@azdes.gov.

Training and support for kinship foster parents: The Arizona Department of Economic Security provides and facilitates support and training to kinship foster care families directly or in partnership with contracted provider service agencies and other community resources. Call Lauri Devine at (602) 542-2419 or ldevine@azdes.gov.

Public Benefits

Children are often eligible for state and federal benefits even if their caregivers do not have legal guardianship or custody. These programs include:

Financial Assistance: Cash assistance may be available to children and their grandparents and other relative caregivers through the Cash Assistance Program.

- A “child-only grant” is for the child and based *only* on the child’s income.
- An adult caregiver may also be included in the grant — based on their income and subject to work requirements and time limits.

Call (800) 352-8401 or log on to www.de.state.az.us/faa/cash.asp.

Food Stamps: Based on the family’s income, kinship care families may also be eligible for food stamps to help meet food and nutrition needs. For more information about these programs, call (800) 352-8401 or log on to

Health Insurance: Grandparents and other relative caregivers may apply for free or low-cost Medical Assistance on behalf of the children they are raising through the Department of Economic Security (DES) Family Assistance Administration. In some cases, caregivers may also be eligible for free coverage under Medicaid. For more information about how to apply for Medical Assistance, call (800) 352-8401 or log on to www.de.state.az.us/faa/medical.asp.

Other Benefits: Other state and federal benefits may also be available to eligible children, such as child care subsidies, disability benefits, and special education services. For more information about these, download CDF's benefit guides for grandparents and other relatives raising children at www.childrensdefense.org or call (202) 662-3568. For more information on the federal benefits that may be available to caregivers, log on to the National Council on Aging's Benefits CheckUp web site at www.benefitscheckup.org.

State Laws

Arizona currently does not have any additional state laws in effect specifically directed at kinship care families.

National Resources

AARP Grandparent Information Center	(888) 687-2277	www.aarp.org/grandparents
Adoption Information Clearinghouse	(888) 251-0075	http://naic.acf.hhs.gov/
The Brookdale Foundation Group	(212) 308 -7355	www.brookdalefoundation.org
Child Welfare League of America	(202) 638-2952	www.cwla.org
Children's Defense Fund	(202) 628-8787	www.childrensdefense.org
Generations United	(202) 289-3979	www.gu.org
Grandfamilies of America	(866) 272-3761	www.grandfamiliesofamerica.com
GrandsPlace	(860) 763-5789	www.grandsplace.com
KINship Information Network	(772) 501-0502	www.kinsupport.org
National Aging Information Center	(202) 619-0724	www.aoa.dhhs.gov
National Committee of Grandparents For Children's Rights	(866) 624-9900	www.grandparentsforchildren.org

Fact sheets are updated annually. Changes or additions should be e-mailed to the AARP Grandparent Information Center at gic@aarp.org. Please write "State Fact Sheets" on your e-mail subject line.